

Message Text

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P 281555Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8381

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 03134

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FOR GARRISON FROM MATLOCK

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OGEN
SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL

1. WE WERE ASTOUNDED AT POSITION TAKEN IN STATE 050368 REGARDING REPAIRS TO 7TH AND 10TH FLOORS. IS IT REALLY DEPARTMENT'S INTENTION TO FORCE US TO KEEP OLD WIRING AND HIGHLY INFLAMMABLE PANELING ON THESE FLOORS IN FACE OF WHAT HAPPENED LAST AUGUST? ASSUME CABLE WENT OUT WITHOUT CLEARANCE BY PERSONNEL WHO UNDERSTAND PURPOSE OF RENOVATION. IT IS NOT FOR OUR COMFORT OR FOR APPEARANCE, BUT FOR SAFETY REASONS. AMBASSADOR MAY WISH TO WEIGH IN BEFORE HE LEAVES IF THERE IS SERIOUS PROBLEM OVER THIS.

2. IN VIEW OF PARTICIPATION BY CHAVEZ IN MARCH 21-22 TOURISM MEETING IN MOSCOW, WE ASSUME THERE IS NO NEED FOR US TO RESPOND TO STATE 46751. WHILE WE WILL BE TAKING A FEW SELECTIVE NOSE COUNTS LOCALLY ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR INCREASING SOVIET TOURISM TO THE UNITED STATES, WE WOULD BE VERY SURPRISED IF THERE WAS MUCH OPTIMISM AMONG THOSE IN THE KNOW. THE PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL CONTROL AND SAVING SCARCE HARD CURRENCY HAVE NOT CHANGED FOR THE
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 03134 010432Z

BETTER, AND ASIDE FROM SOME POSSIBLE TOKEN OF INTEREST, WE DO NOT EXPECT SOVIETS WILL BE VERY FORTHCOMING. WE ARE CURIOUS AS TO WHY SOVIETS ALLEGEDLY HAVE BEEN PRESSING SO HARD FOR THIS MEETING.

3. THE NEXT TIME YOU TALK WITH AGNES PALL OF CIMS PLEASE TELL HER THAT WE ARE PLANNING AN EMBASSY BRIEFING AS SHE

REQUESTED. IT WOULD HELP US HERE IF YOU COULD FIND OUT WHETHER CIMS IS PREPARED TO PAY FOR THE COST OF AN EMBASSY RECEPTION (STATE 16400) OR WHETHER SHE IS EXPECTING US TO FUND IT.

4. NEITHER EMBASSY NOR CONSULATE GENERAL WERE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN VENTSPILS INAUGURAL. RICHARD O'BRIEN OF TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCIL SAID HE GOT AN ORAL INVITATION FROM DAN GARINE OF OCCIDENTAL TO ATTEND. HE WAS OF IMPRESSION THAT FTO SOYUZHIMEKSPORT WAS SUPPOSED TO DO THE FORMAL HONORS BUT FELL DOWN ON THE JOB. WHILE WE HAVE NOT SPOKEN WITH U.S. PRESS WHO SUPPOSEDLY WERE INVITED BUT FAILED TO SHOW, WE SUSPECT THAT THEIR INVITATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN EITHER LATE OR NON-EXISTENT.

5. WE HAVE RECEIVED A TMONE ASSIGNING JOHN CONDAYAN TO REPLACE TOM TRACY. COULD YOU GET US JOHN'S CURRENT ADDRESS, SO TOM CAN WRITE TO HIM?

6. ASSUME YOU HAVE MOSCOW 3009, REQUESTING EXTENSION FOR LOUIS SELL FROM 6/79 TO 6/80, WITH ASSIGNMENT FROM 6/79 TO POL/INT VICE SMITH. WE STRONGLY SUPPORT SINCE LOUIS HAS BEEN TURNING IN VERY SOLID PERFORMANCE AND IS EXCELLENT DRAFTER. ALSO ASSUME YOU SAW FARRAND'S CABLE LAST WEEK WHICH WE ASSUME SOLVES THAT PROBLEM.
MATLOCK
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 03134 010432Z

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